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POL 14 VIET S

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

EXCISE

CONFIDENTIAL

Control: 12423
Rec'd: JUNE 13, 1966
11:05 A.M.

Action
Info

FROM: SAIGON

ACTION: SECSTATE PRIORITY 5506

INFO: CINCPAC 2894
DANANG 482
HUE 710

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC, MR
REVIEWED BY Ivan Izenberg DATE 10/6/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

DATE: JUNE 13

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

Pol Unit 5
+ R Pol 15-1 Viets

REF: EMBTEL 5502

1. [redacted] TOLD EMBOFF JUNE 13 b-1 ed THAT DIRECTORATE, IN CONSULTATION WITH OFFICERS OF ELECTION LAW DRAFTING COMMITTEE, HAD MADE YGVERAL CHANGES IN DRAFT LAW. MINISTRY OF INTERIOR IS NOW PUTTING FINAL TOUCHES ON DECREE-LAW A WHICH WILL EMBODY THESE CHANGES. LAW WILL THEN BE PROMULGATED JUNE 19 IN CONJUNCTION WITH OBSERVANCE VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES DAY AND FIRST ANNIVERSARY KY GOVERNMENT. [redacted] PROMISED EMBOFF ADVANCE COPY "WITHIN TWO DAYS".

2. [redacted] SAID THAT DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO REDUCE NUMBER OF SEATS IN CONSTITUTEND ASSEMBLY FROM NUMBER RECOMMENDED BY DRAFTING COMMITTEE. TOTAL MEMBERSHIP WILL NOW BE 119 AND WILL INCLUDE NINE MONTAGNARD REPRESENTATIVES (ON BASIS OF SELECTION BY TRIBAL COUNCILS) AND THREE CAMBODIAN-ORIGIN REPRESENTATIVES (ELECTED FROM THEIR HOME PROVINCES). EACH PROVINCE AND AUTONOMOUS CITY WILL STILL HAVE AT LEAST ONE SEAT IN THE ASSEMBLY, BUT MULTI-SEAT DISTRICTS WILL BE PROPORTIONATELY REDUCED.

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3. ELECTION WILL BE ON BASIS OF LISTS AND NOT ON BASIS OF INDIVIDUAL CANDIDACIES. [redacted] SAYS THAT ENLARGED DIRECTORATE VOTED 18 TO 2 IN FAVOR OF THIS CHANGE. FEELING IS THAT LIST VOTING WILL FORCE FACTIONALIZED POLITICAL GROUPS TO UNITE, THEREBY ACCELERATING POLITICAL EVOLUTION IN THE COUNTRY. LIST VOTING, HE POINTED OUT, WILL OF COURSE NOT EFFECT INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE RUNNING IN SINGLE MEMBER PROVINCES OR CITIES.

[redacted] SAID THAT SAIGON AND GIA DINH WOULD PROBABLY BE BROKEN INTO ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BECAUSE OF THEIR PROPORTIONATELY GREATER POPULATIONS. SAIGON, HE PREDICTED, WOULD HAVE THREE DISTRICTS, ONE OF WHICH WOULD INCLUDE ALL OF CHOLON. HE SAID THAT FIVE SEATS WOULD BE ALLOTTED TO THIS DISTRICT WITH SAIGON'S OTHER SEATS SPLIT BETWEEN THE OTHER TWO DISTRICTS. WHEN ASKED ABOUT TEN-YEAR CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENT FOR CANDIDATES, [redacted] SAID THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT DIRECTORATE HAD REDUCED THIS TO FIVE YEARS. THIS WOULD EFFECTIVELY LIFT DE FACTO PROHIBITION ON CHINESE CANDIDACIES WHICH TEN YEAR CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENT HAD IMPOSED.

5. WHEN ASKED HOW LIST SYSTEM WOULD ACTUALLY OPERATE, [redacted] DESCRIBED A HYPOTHETICAL CONSTITUENCE WHERE EIGHT SEATS WERE BEING CONTESTED. ASSUMING TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND VOTERS WENT TO POLLS IN THIS DISTRICT, TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND VOTES WOULD AUTOMATICALLY BECOME TOTAL REQUIRED TO OBTAIN ONE SEAT. FOR THE PURPOSES OF EXAMPLE, FOUR LISTS WERE CONTESTING WITHIN THIS CONSTITUENCY. ASSUMING LIST A GOT EIGHTH THOUSAND VOTES, IT WOULD AUTOMATICALLY ACQUIRE THREE SEATS AND RETAIN AN OVERAGE OF FIVE THOUSAND VOTES. IF LIST B GOT FIFTY-FIVE THOUSAND VOTES, IT WOULD

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AUTOMATICALLY ACQUIRE TWO SEATS AND RETAIN AN OVERAGE OF FIVE THOUSAND. IF LIST C GOT FORTY-FIVE THOUSAND VOTES, IT WOULD GET ONE SEAT AND HAVE AN OVERAGE OF FIFTEEN THOUSAND. IF LIST D GOT 20,000, IT WOULD NOT AUTOMATICALLY ACQUIRE ANY SEATS, BUT WOULD RETAIN ITS TWENTY THOUSAND VOTES. THUS SIX SEATS WOULD BE DECIDED ON FIRST COUNT AND OTHER TWO WOULD BE AWARDED ON BASIS OF REMAINING VOTES. IN [redacted] EXAMPLE LIST D WOULD GET ONE SEAT BECAUSE ITS TWENTY THOUSAND EXCEEDS OVERAGE OF A, B, OR C. FINAL SEAT WILL GO TO C BECAUSE ITS OVERAGE EXCEEDS THOSE OF A OR B.

6. REGARDING PREPARATION OF LISTS, [redacted] SAID THAT EACH GROUP PRESENTING LIST WOULD BE PERMITTED TO LIST SUPPLEMENTARY CANDIDATES SO THAT IF ONE OR MORE OF ORIGINAL LISTING WERE FOUND TO BE ELIGIBLE SPPLEMENTARY SAMES WILL BE MOVED UP ON LIST TO TAKE THEIR PLACE.

7. AS FOR MECHANICS OF ADMINISTERING ELECTIONS, [redacted] FEELS THAT VOTER WILL NOT BE BOTHERED BY LIST SYSTEM AND WILL PROBABLY FIND IT EASIER THAN INDIVIDUAL CANDIDACY SYSTEM PROPOSED BY DRAFTING COMMITTEE. VOTER WILL, AFTER ALL, BE VOTING FOR VNQD, DAI VETG, OR WHATEVER GROUP IT IS HE FAVORS IN HIS DISTRICT.

8. IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUESTION, [redacted] CONFIRMED THAT FORMULA PROPOSED BY DRAFTING COMMITTEE TO BRING ABOUT EXCLUSION OF COMMUNIST OR NEUTRALIST, FELT VERY STRONGLY ON THIS POINT, THAT ONLY TRUE "NATIONALISTS" BE PERMITTED TO STAND AS CANDIDATES. HE INDICATED HIS BELIEF THAT LIST SYSTEM WAS A OPTED AS YET ANOTHER GUARANTEE THAT SUCH ELEMENTS WERE EXCLUDED.; LODGE

WLC/19

ADVANCE COPY TO S/SO 3:20 P.M. 6/13/66

NOTE: PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, USIA & NSA 3:20 P.M. 6/13/66

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INCOMING TELEGRAM — CONFIDENTIAL — CONTROL: 12423
CORRECTION ISSUED: 5:50 a.m. 6/14/66

SS

-3- 5506, JUNE 13, FROM SAIGON - CORRECTED PAGE 3

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8. IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUESTION, [ ] CONFIRMED THAT FORMULA PROPOSED BY DRAFTING COMMITTEE TO BRING ABOUT EXCLUSION OF COMMUNIST OR NEUTRALIST CANDIDATES HAD BEEN RETAINED. DIRECTORATE, HE MAINTAINED, FELT VERY STRONGLY ON THIS POINT, THAT ONLY TRUE "NATIONALISTS" BE PERMITTED TO STAND AS CANDIDATES. HE INDICATED HIS BELIEF THAT LIST SYSTEM WAS ADOPTED AS YET ANOTHER GUARANTEE THAT SUCH ELEMENTS WERE EXCLUDED. LODGE

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NOTE: ADVANCE CORRECTION TO S/S-O 1:45 A.M., JUNE 14.
CORRECTION PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, USIA, NSA 1:45 A.M., JUNE 14.

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